

V P S I N C I T Y C O U N C I L

AGENDA



Thursday, February 15, 2007

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Item(s) from Council
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION

ITEM No. 23

Subject: Approve a resolution adopting a Climate Protection Plan for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and directing the City Manager to develop the policies and procedures necessary to implement the Plan.

Sponsor: Mayor Will Wynn

Co-Sponsor1: Council Member Lee Leffingwell

Co-Sponsor2: Council Member Brewster McCracken

Additional Backup Material
(click to open)
ACC_P_Final_Resolution

For More Information: Matt Watson, 972-2250

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WHEREAS, the City of Austin's mission is to make Austin the most livable city in the country, and,

WHEREAS, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has found unequivocally that climate change constitutes a serious and growing threat and that human activities are the primary source of increased atmospheric concentrations of global warming gases; and,

WHEREAS, global scientific consensus predicts as a consequence of global warming costly and dangerous disruptions, including increased risk of flooding, drought and coastal storms, accelerated spread of disease and invasive species, severe property damage, economic loss, and threat to human life; and

WHEREAS, the United States represents less than five percent of the world's population but contributes more than thirty percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, and

WHEREAS, climate change calls for national and international responses, but ultimately greenhouse gas emissions are generated locally, and

WHEREAS, the federal government has failed to enact meaningful responses to reverse the threat of global warming, and

WHEREAS, leading U S companies have called for immediate measures to halt and reverse the threat of global warming, and

WHEREAS, cities and states throughout the U S are adopting greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and strategies; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin continues to take a leadership role in addressing worldwide environmental concerns;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

That the City Council directs the City Manager to develop and implement, and to report to the City Council annually upon the implementation and progress of, such policies, procedures, timelines and targets as are necessary to make Austin the leading city in the nation in the effort to reduce and reverse the negative impacts of global warming, including but not limited to the following initiatives

- 1) Make all City of Austin facilities, fleets and operations totally carbon-neutral by 2020 through measures including
 - a powering all City facilities with renewable energy by 2012,
 - b making the entire City fleet of vehicles carbon neutral by 2020 through the use of electric power, non-petroleum fuels, new technologies, mitigation, and other

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- measures as necessary, prioritizing the earliest possible conversion to such fuels and technologies and establishing timelines and benchmarks for such conversions,
- c. developing and implementing departmental climate protection plans, including policies, procedures, targets, benchmarks and reporting for maximum achievable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption in all City departments,
 - d. developing an employee climate protection education program, programs and incentives to help employees reduce their personal impact on climate change, and training to help employees engage in community outreach for climate protection
- 2) Make Austin Energy the leading utility in the nation for greenhouse gas reductions through measures including
- a. achieving 700 MW of new savings through energy efficiency and conservation efforts by 2020,
 - b. meeting 30 percent of all energy needs through the use of renewable resources by 2020, including at least 100 MW of solar power,
 - c. establishing a CO₂ cap and developing and implementing a CO₂ reduction plan for existing utility emissions,
 - d. achieving carbon neutrality on any new generation units using carbon-based fuels through the utilization of lowest-emission technologies, carbon capture and sequestration if it is proven to be reliable, mitigation and other prudent measures
- 3) Implement the most energy efficient building codes in the nation and aggressively pursue energy efficiency retrofits and upgrades to existing building stock through measures including
- a. implementing building codes requiring all new single-family homes to be zero net-energy capable by 2015;
 - b. implementing building codes to increase energy efficiency in all other new private and public sector buildings by at least 75 percent by 2015,
 - c. implementing policies identifying opportunities for energy efficiency retrofits and upgrades, and requiring all cost-effective retrofits and upgrades for all properties at the point of sale,
 - d. developing enhanced technical assistance and marketing incentives and standards for the Green Building Program, developing policies requiring achievement of upper-tier ratings in cases where green building is mandated as a product of City programs or negotiations, and developing an optional "Carbon Neutral" certification to

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- accompany green building ratings
- 4) Establish an interdepartmental City Climate Action Team responsible for creating an inventory of greenhouse gases generated from all sources community-wide, working with stakeholders and technical advisors, establishing short-term and long-term targets for reducing these emissions, and reporting back to the City Council in no more than one year with a comprehensive plan for meeting those targets. Key areas for study and policy development include but are not limited to:
 - a. transportation,
 - b. land use planning,
 - c. emerging technologies;
 - d. waste management;
 - e. natural areas, landscapes and other carbon sinks,
 - f. multi-generational community education
 - 5) Develop and implement a program to assist all citizens, businesses, organizations and visitors in achieving carbon neutrality through the following measures:
 - a. develop an Austin-specific online "carbon footprint calculator,"
 - b. make available individually-tailored carbon footprint appraisals to organizations as necessary,
 - c. develop a menu of greenhouse gas reduction strategies for local implementation that citizens and organizations can fund through the purchase of "carbon offset" credits, thereby reducing their own carbon footprint,
 - d. develop a program for recognition of households, businesses and other organizations achieving carbon neutrality,
 - e. promote carbon neutrality among visitors by providing mechanisms and incentives for the purchase of offset credits by travelers, conventions, tradeshow and festivals.
 - 6) Cooperate with other local and regional entities to provide technical and investigational assistance and to coordinate region-wide greenhouse gas reduction strategies.
 - 7) Support all appropriate Federal and State policies and legislation that will lead to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions